

Message Text

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63

ACTION ARA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-07 L-02

NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

USIA-06 OMB-01 EB-07 INSE-00 SIL-01 LAB-04 COME-00

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R 072010Z JAN 75

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 7154

AMEMBASSY MEXICO

INFO AMEMBASSY GUATEMALA

AMEMBASSY SAN JOSE

AMEMBASSY TEGUCIGALPA

AMEMBASSY BELIZE

AMEMBASSY PANAMA

AMEMBASSY MANAGUA

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EO 11652: N/A

TAGS: PBOR CGEN ES MX

SUBJ: DETENTION OF SALVADORANS TRANSITING MEXICO

REF: MEXICO 10542 OF 12/18/74

1. PURSUANT TO REFTEL, EMBASSY HAS BECOME AWARE OF AT LEAST TWO INSTANCES IN WHICH SALVADORANS IN POSSESSION OF VALID MEXICAN TRANSIT VISAS AND U.S. TOURIST VISAS WERE INCARCERATED WITHOUT EXPLANATION IN MEXICALI AND LATER TRANSFERRED TO PRISON IN MEXICO CITY. THREE OF THE FOUR INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED HAVE VOLUNTARILY REPORTED THE INCIDENTS TO THE EMBASSY UPON RETURN TO EL SALVADOR.

2. ON OR ABOUT NOVEMBER 18, TWO SALVADORAN YOUTHS WHO WERE TRAVELLING THROUGH MEXICO BY BUS ENROUTE TO THE U.S. WERE
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DETAINED BY MEXICAN OFFICIALS AT MEXICALI. BOTH WERE IN POSSES-

SION OF VALID MEXICAN TRANSIT AND U.S. TOURIST VISAS. ALL PASSENGERS WERE ORDERED TO LEAVE THE BUS, US\$200 WAS DEMANDED FROM EACH, AND THE ENTIRE GROUP (INCLUDING CHILDREN AND ELDERLY) WERE PLACED IN JAIL. ACCORDING TO THE FATHER OF ONE OF THE YOUTHS (WHO, INCIDENTALLY, IS CHIEF OF EDITORS, SALVADORAN DAILY "DIARIO DE HOY") THE PRETEXT FOR JAILING WAS THAT " THE TRANSIT VISA WAS NOT VALID IN NORTHERN MEXICO." FOLLOWING TWO DAYS INCARCERATION IN MEXICALI, THE ENTIRE GROUP (INCLUDING OTHER CENTRAL AMERICANS) WAS TRANSFERRED TO PRISON IN MEXICO CITY FOR A PERIOD OF 5 DAYS. EVENTUALLY, THE GROUP WAS PHOTOGRAPHED AND FINGERPRINTED AND RELEASED WITH THE ADMONITION THAT "IF THEY RETURNED THEY WOULD BE SUBJECT TO 10 YEARS IN PRISON OR A FINE OF 5000 PESOS".

3. ON NOVEMBER 23, A SALVADORAN CITIZEN AND HIS YOUNGER BROTHER FLEW FROM SAN SALVADOR TO MEXICO CITY AND CONTINUED THEIR TRIP TO THE U.S. BY BUS. AT GUADARAJARA, ON NOVEMBER 25, PASSPORTS OF ALL PASSENGERS WERE TAKEN BY MEXICAN OFFICIALS, STATING THAT THE PASSPORTS WOULD BE RETURNED AT MEXICALI. UPON ARRIVING AT MEXICALI, AN AMBULANCE WAS PARKED BY THE DOOR OF THE BUS AND THE PASSENGERS WERE UNLOADED FROM THE BUS DIRECTLY INTO THE AMBULANCE AND TRANSPORTED TO JAIL WITHOUT EXPLANATION. FOUR MEXICANS AND TWO NON-CENTRAL AMERICANS WERE RELEASED. THE FOLLOWING DAY THE MEXICAN OFFICIALS DEMANDED U.S.\$10 FOR THE COST OF PUTTING THE SALVADORANS IN JAIL AND THE YOUNGER SALVADORAN (AGE 11), WHO HAD BEEN SEPARATED FROM HIS BROTHER, WAS STRUCK IN THE FACE BY A MEXICAN "AGENT" WHEN HE REPLIED THAT HE HAD NO MONEY. THE PRISONERS WERE LATER TRANSPORTED TO MEXICO CITY. AFTER THE SAME ADMONISHMENT "NOT TO RETURN", THE SALVADORANS WERE RELEASED AND, ALTHOUGH THEY HAD RETURN AIR TICKETS FROM MEXICO CITY TO EL SALVADOR, THEY WERE REQUIRED TO RETURN TO EL SALVADOR BY BUS. THEIR PASSPORTS WERE RETURNED AS THEY CROSSED THE BORDER WITH GUATEMALA.

4. OF PARTICULAR INTEREST IN THE LATTER INCIDENT IS THAT NOTATIONS IN ENGLISH WERE PLACED IN THE PASSPORTS ON THE SAME PAGE AS THE U.S. VISA AND ON THE FOLLOWING PAGE, PRESUMABLY BY MEXICAN OFFICIALS. IN BOTH PASSPORTS AT THE SIDE OF THE U.S. VISA IT IS ANNOTATED "SEE PAGE 9" (WHICH WAS FOLLOWING PAGE). ON THE PASSPORT OF THE 11-YEAR-OLD, THE NOTATION READS "DEFERRED PROFF STUDENT STATUS. PROFF OF SUPPORT. :-) (OR CAT) 11/25/74". THE NOTATION IN THE ELDER LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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BROTHER'S PASSPORT READS, "DEFERRED SUBSTANTIAL PROFF OF EMPLOYMENT AND VACATION LETTER CAL (OR CAT) 11/25/74". THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DOUBT THAT THE NOTATIONS, ALTHOUGH IN ENGLISH, WERE PLACED IN THE PASSPORTS BY U.S. IMMIGRATION OFFICIALS, I.E., VISAS WERE NOT HAND CANCELLED, AND CARE WAS TAKEN TO AVOID DEFACING U.S. VISAS. FURTHER, THERE IS NOT EVIDENCE THAT EITHER ENTERED U.S. TERRITORY.

5. ALL OF THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED HAVE PROTESTED TO MEXICAN EMBASSY AND AT LEAST TWO DIRECTLY TO THE MEXICAN AMBASSADOR. COMMENTS BY THE AMBASSADOR, AS REPORTED BY THE FAMILIES OF THE INDIVIDUALS INVOLVED, INCLUDE: (A) "WE'RE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH THEM (THE U.S.)... THEY'RE KICKING OUT MEXICANS AND TAKING THEIR JOBS". (B) "LONG HAIRS AREN'T ACCEPTED IN MEXICO"; (C) "PERHAPS THEY HAD LONG HAIR OR DIDN'T HAVE ANY MONEY"; (D) "FILL OUT A REPORT". AT LEAST ONE IRATE MOTHER HAD PROTESTED TO THE SALVADORAN FONOFF.

6. CONTRARY TO OPINION EXPRESSED IN PARA 5 REFTTEL, GOM IS APPARENTLY CRACKING DOWN INDISCRIMINATELY ON ALL CENTRAL AMERICANS TRANSITING MEXICO BY LAND -- NOT ONLY ILLEGAL TRAFFIC, BU VALIDLY DOCUMENTED TRAVELLERS AS WELL. WHILE SALVADORAN PRESS HAS NOT TAKEN UP ISSUE TO DATE, IT IS DOUBTFUL THAT AFOREMENTIONED INCIDENTS ARE ISOLATED AND CONTINUED HARRASSMENT WILL EVENTUALLY REQUIRE EXPLANATION FROM GOM.

7. OF DIRECT CONCERN TO POST IS APPARENT GOM ATTEMPTS TO PLACE U.S. IN CULPABLE POSITION. A STORY WHICH WILL NO DOUBT RECEIVE WIDE CIRCULATION SUGGESTS THAT US A RESULT OF THE RECENT MEETING BETWEEN PRESIDENT FORD AND PRESIDENT ECHEVERRIA, PRESIDENT FORD IS OFFERING \$25 A HEAD TO GOM FOR EVERY ILLEGAL RESTRAINED FROM PASSING THROUGH MEXICO TO THE U.S.

8.A COPY OF NOTATIONS MADE IN PASSPORTS DESCRIBED IN PARA 4 AND UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF A COMPLAINT FILED BY A SALVADORAN CITIZEN WITH MEXICAN EMBASSY FOLLOWS BY OM.
MOSKOWITZ

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